

New Life Episcopal Church
Uniontown, Ohio



St Michael the Archangel

A Sermon for the 18th Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

Rev Barbara Bond

[Saint Michael and All Angels](#)

Genesis 28:10-17, Hebrews 13: 1-2

Angelic communication

Today we celebrate St Michael and all angels. St Michael himself is very interesting, as are all the archangels, but today I would like to consider the angels in our lives today.

A few years ago, the Worship Committee distributed little packets of Angel Cards to the parish, and I know that many of these angel cards are still in active use. These little cards feature many holy attributes of angels, along with beguiling illustrations of angels doing angelic things. Sometimes picking a card or two can give you direction for your day. You may wonder, are the angels trying to tell me something? For instance, yesterday as I began my day with devotions, I pulled two cards on which were written PLAY and COMMUNICATION. I decided the angels wanted me to know not to take myself too seriously and to play a bit; but they also wanted to get me started on my sermon, so the other card was COMMUNICATION. I trust the angelic host was with me as I was writing about them! Let's see what they advise for today (*demonstrate*)

The cards are often uncanny reminders of things going on in our lives, and many of us choose to regard the cards as messages from angels. Angels are, after all, messengers from God. Some people call these seemingly accidental messages Serendipity. Others, including the great psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, call them Synchronicity – when two events coincide and get your attention. Call them perhaps Wake Up calls. MJ Maling calls them God Incidences. Such collisions of events occurred to me with great frequency when I was discerning my call to ordained ministry about 40 years ago, and I chose to interpret them as messages from God.

What do the Scriptures tell us? Our first reading is from Genesis, the moving account of Jacob seeing angels ascending and descending from heaven. This glorious vision is often called Jacob's ladder. It was a teaching moment. Jacob had fled from his family home because he had tricked his twin brother Esau and he was afraid to stay, so he set out to a distant area in Haran. He stopped on his journey to spend the night, and he was visited by a beautiful dream. He saw angels going up and down between heaven to earth. He was privileged to view the traffic of angels. God stood right at his side and interpreted the great gift to Jacob and his offspring, that they would inherit the land and be the progenitors of God's people. When Jacob woke up, he was astonished by this vision and commented, "Surely the Lord was in this place, and I didn't know it." Right!

I would like to think about those ascending and descending angels for a bit. I wonder if some of our friends, who may seem like angels to us, might be somewhere on that escalator, being loaned to us for just a little while. I think of Saint Francis as one of those beings. Perhaps he descended from God to guide us here on earth, and then he

ascended to be with God in continuing influence. It is as if Francis were an angelic human.

And what about Jesus himself? Rather than an angelic human, he was God incarnate, who came down to earth to dwell with us, to live with us, and then ascend to dwell perpetually with God and with us, forever. Traffic on the staircase to heaven is a great heavenly gift!

I am sure there are angels among us. You may be unaware of their presence, as the author of the letter to the Hebrews famously wrote, "Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that, some have entertained angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:1-2) The older translation reads, "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Dale Evans took this quote for the title of her 1953 book, *Angel Unaware*, about her infant daughter Robin who was born with Down Syndrome, and who lived two and a half years before succumbing. The story is narrated by the child from heaven. Ms. Evans was certain that her daughter was an angel.

And so let us take this instruction seriously. We live and move and rub elbows with lots of people, and they may indeed be angels unawares. Let us behave as if everyone is.